

CORRUPTIONS

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# CORRUPTIONS AND FRAUDS OF LINCOLN'S ADMINISTRATION.

When the present Republican Administration assumed federal power, it found itself confronted with events of the gravest import to the safety, honor, and welfare of the Union. Everything conspired to make men serious, unselfish, and patriotic. The fabric which the men of the revolution had erected, out of decaying nationalities, the keen jealousies of states, and earnest differences in respect to treatment of the great problem of slave labor, was tottering to its fall. In such an hour, it is next to impossible to conceive that the leaders of the dominant party could find it in their hearts to place personal objects above considerations of the public good. But so it was. The spectacle of a great nation struggling for life, only seems to have inspired the motley horde of office-seekers, who followed Mr. LINCOLN to Washington, to confederate together to see how they could best rob and plunder the national pocket. The rapacity of these Republican leaders presented an example of indecent lust for pecuniary gain, amid the agonies of death, which has been only equalled by rebel wretches on a smaller scale, on so many battle fields.

It would require volumes to give even an outline of the myriad cases of pecuniary fraud and corruption which have marked the track of the present Federal Administration since its advent to power. If it were possible to group together all the monstrous frauds, presided over by Mr. LINCOLN, as Chief Executive, it would be still impossible for the mind to grasp and realize their enormity. Our faculties would be no more equal to the tremendous task, than they are to take in, and duly appreciate the awful suffering and agony of a great battle, where ten thousand of our kindred, neighbors, and countrymen are maimed, butchered, or killed by the iron weapon of relentless war. The manly nature, whose sensibilities are overcome by the spectacle of even one human being in the struggle of mortal pain, is struck dumb by the contemplation of ten thousand in the same frightful state. So with the pecuniary frauds of the present Administration. If presented as a whole, they paralyze the conscience and judgment of honest men. We can only consider them in detail, and it is the purpose of the present paper to call the attention of voters and tax-payers of the country to one or two of the wretched schemes of speculation and plunder into which the prominent partisans of Mr. LINCOLN have embarked.

We begin with the New York Custom House, and from one case we may learn all.

President LINCOLN, having to select his cabinet advisers, elected upon the doctrines of *Helper's "Impending Crisis,"* proceeded to select his cabinet advisers, upon much the same theory as a successful pirate chieftain would parcel out plunder among his followers; the Treasury Department fell to the portion of Mr. CHASE, who, in the secondary distribution of opportunities for pecuniary gain, selected HIRAM BARNEY to be collector of the great port of New York, in which is collected the chief part of all revenue of the United States derived from duties on imports. Mr. BARNEY was quite unknown to the country. He had never held Federal office of any kind, elective or executive, and had never received mark of distinction in the public affairs of New York. No large delegations of merchants requested his appointment. The controlling ground of his selection was the personal relation, of money and business, which had existed between himself and the Secretary of the Treasury.

When Mr. BARNEY entered upon his new duties, his first acts developed how little of patriotic devotion to an agonized Union, and how much of purpose to fill their own pockets, entered into the thoughts and purposes of those who were his superiors in office, and his associates in politics, and who were, among other things, looking forward to the time when ill-gotten gains could be used by office holders to perpetuate party power and cover up misdeeds.

It had happened that, under a previous Administration, certain persons had conceived the idea of proposing to do the labor required at the appraisers' stores, the Custom House, and elsewhere, by contract, the price to be estimated upon each case or package. This labor, made necessary by examination of merchandise by the government appraisers, to fix the dutiable value of importations, had always been done by laborers, cartmen, and drays, hired by the United States, by the month or year. The Treasury Department, being of opinion that the proposition of doing the work by contract, presented the same class of advantages to the United States that contractors do to private individuals, made an agreement with Messrs. MCINTIRE, BIXBY & Co., to do the work. The contract turned out to be an advantageous one, both to the Government and the contractors.

It was for a term of years, which was unexpired when Mr. BARNEY came into office, and yet could on certain conditions be annulled by the Treasury Department.

This contract was among the earliest of the things for which, while all New York beside was flinging away every thought of self, in one supreme emotion and desire to vindicate the honor of the flag struck down at Sumter, the Republican clique, headed by Messrs. CHASE and BARNEY, made desperate efforts. The rich prize was quickly in their possession, when it was decided to use the power and terror of the Government to deprive the inventors of the contract idea, of that property in their invention and subsequent agreement, which was as clearly their own, as is a man's house or land. It was authoritatively represented to Messrs. MCINTIRE, BIXBY & Co., that unless they sold their contract to certain persons, to be named by Mr. WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER, or those, directly or indirectly, associated with him, the Administration would cause it to be annulled altogether. The result was that the contract was assigned over, and conveyed to LUTHER B. WYMAN (a book-keeper in the house of Charles H. Marshall & Co.) and SIMON STEVENS (a cousin of Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, then a controlling Republican member of the House of Representatives). These were the assignees named in the writings. The original contractors having given bonds to the United States, for due performance of the contract, on their part, a bond of indemnity was given to them, as their sureties, which was signed by CHARLES H. MARSHALL (father-in-law of William Allen Butler, of the law firm of Barney, Butler, and Parsons); JOHN D. SCOTT and SIMON STEVENS, each justifying in the sum of thirty thousand dollars. In the management of the business, under the new contractors, Mr. BIXBY, one of the old contractors, was employed, or continued in charge, and he accounted to WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER every week for all money receipts, and there is good reason to believe that the law firm of BARNEY, BUTLER & PARSONS, was the real assignee and owners of all but one fourth of the contract, which one fourth was the property of Messrs. STEVENS and BIXBY.

This subject of the labor contract, as it came to be known, was so full of badness, in its every aspect, that Congress could not, in consequence of Democratic clamor, resist making it a matter of legislative inquiry; and how completely the speculators managed to evade the scrutiny of a congressional committee, can best be seen by the following extract from the report of its chairman, Colonel VAN WYCK, a member of Congress from New York.

Let the witness LUTHER B. WYMAN, one of the assignees, speak first:

Q. Were you, or were you not, interested in what is called the labor contract at the public stores? A. I was. Q. From what time to what time? A. From the 11th of May, 1861, until about the 6th or 7th of September, 1862. Q. Who else was interested in the contract during that time? A. Mr. Luther B. Wyman. Q. Any other person? A. I know of no other person directly interested. Q. Any other person indirectly? A. I represented one half of the contract and Luther B. Wyman represented the other half. Q. Be kind enough to tell us whether anybody else had any direct or indirect interest in it? A. I represented one half of it, it was in my name; I bought it and paid for it. Q. Did anybody have any indirect interest in any portion of the contract except what you have represented? A. I have only my suppositions. Q. What

do you know about that matter? A. That I was requested to pay one half of the profits, whatever they might be, over and above expenses, to William Allen Butler. Mr. Butler stated that he was the attorney for Mr. Wyman. Payments were so made and receipt therefor given by William Allen Butler, as attorney for the two first payments. Subsequently, receipts were given by him for money paid to him, signed in initial "W. A. B." Then and from that day all payments were made to him and receipts given to him, and so signed, with the exception of some few payments which were made to George W. Parsons, who sometimes receipted for them, simply, "G. W. P." on some occasions, "W. A. B. per G. W. P.," and sometimes "G. W. P. for W. A. B." Q. Who is this William Allen Butler? A. He is of the law firm of Barney, Butler & Parsons. Q. Who is this Mr. Parsons? A. He is of the firm of Barney, Butler & Parsons. Q. Who is the Barney of that firm? A. Hiram Barney, collector of the port of New York. Q. Is that firm now in business here? A. Yes, sir. Q. Did you pay any of these proceeds to Mr. Wyman himself? A. No, sir. Q. Did Mr. Wyman himself direct you where to pay those proceeds? A. He did not. Q. Did you have any authority directly from Mr. Wyman to pay them as you did? A. Simply on the day of the execution of the papers, Mr. William Allen Butler said, in the presence of Mr. Wyman, this in purport: "As I am the attorney for Mr. Wyman, the net proceeds of this contract will be paid to me." Q. Did Mr. Wyman assent to that? A. Mr. Wyman nodded assent. Q. You took no paper to protect you for such payments? A. I did not, nor have any such papers. Q. Do you know, from Mr. Wyman or otherwise, whether Mr. Wyman had any interest in this contract beyond the use of his name? A. Mr. WYMAN HAS, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, STATED TO ME THAT HE HAD NO INTEREST, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, IN THE CONTRACT, OTHERWISE THAN THE USE OF HIS NAME. Q. Did he tell you who had the interest represented by his name? A. He said he knew of nobody in this matter except William Allen Butler, who claimed to act as attorney for the parties actually in interest.

Mr. WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER was subsequently sworn, and Col. VAN WYCK comments on his examination in this wise:

On the 3d day of January, Mr. Butler was sworn: I was not present at his examination; I say this in justice to myself, for it seems almost impossible that his examination should have been concluded, and he not asked who were the real parties in interest whom he represented when that was one of the subjects of investigation. Only three questions were put to Mr. Butler. The first, as to his residence and business; the second, "have you read the testimony taken before this committee, touching the transfer of the labor contract?" and the third, "have you any statement to make touching your connexion with that transfer of interest under the so-called labor contract?" Mark the gentleness of the interrogatories. Was it because he was the law partner of Mr. Barney? I know not. Among other things, to the last question he says: "But whatever information I had on the subject was derived in the course of my professional employment, and I acquired no positive knowledge about it. Funds were placed in my hands by PARTIES IN INTEREST." He evidently did not mean Stevens or Wyman; he nowhere states who were the PARTIES in interest, and, most strange of all, he was not asked.

The connexion of the general orders with this contract shows irresistibly who were behind the scene, because they were worked in happy unison.

These loyal patriots, not content with thus grasping the labor contract, before described, forthwith set lustful eyes upon the general order business of the Custom House.

When a vessel arrives in the port of New York, the captain obtains an order to send all goods on his

ship, which are unclaimed at the end of a certain time, which time is longer in case of sail than steam vessels, "under general order," as it is called. This means to send them to one of the stores designated by the Collector for the reception of "general order" merchandise. The quantity of merchandise thus sent under "general order" from steamers, is immense, and the profit to the owner of the warehouses is great in proportion. By law and regulation, the Collector is bound to send the "general order" goods to the warehouses nearest the discharging ship. The port of New York is divided into two general divisions; one on North River, and the other on East River. It is estimated that "general order" warehouses on North River are worth not less than one hundred thousand dollars a year.

When the present Administration came into power, successful efforts were made to constrain the then proprietors of "general order" stores to pay over to certain parties, one third of their receipts, on pain of being deprived of orders altogether. It was developed by Col. VAN WYCK's committee, that foremost among those who thus levied black-mail by Republican authority, on the East River division, was the firm of BOWEN & LAMBERT; and it is reported that BOWEN is brother-in-law of Collector BARNEY. On the North River, the "general order" business all passed into the hands of BIXBY & Co., in which firm JAMES HUMPHREY and (so says witness Charles Squire, jr.) young MARSHALL, son of Charles H. Marshall, before alluded to, as bondsman on the labor contract, were partners.

This Mr. JAMES HUMPHREY is a conspicuous Republican, was formerly Member of Congress from Brooklyn, and partner of Collector BARNEY. And it is a further curious and suggestive fact, that the CHARLES H. MARSHALL, whose book-keeper was stool pigeon of this elaborate contrivance of dishonorable speculation, whose son was partner in the "general order" stores, and who was also bondsman for the ring, is the same man who was so indignant at the suggestion of illuminating his house at the recent monster Democratic gathering in Union Square in behalf of the Union, and wrote a letter expressing his excessive trouble about the Chicago platform.

So true is it, in the present canvass, that wherever is found a man, bitter in denunciation of McCLELLAN, or loud-mouthed in adulation of LINCOLN, it can be safely predicted of him, that he is either a contractor, or office-holder, or a man, in some purely private matter, benefited by Mr. Lincoln.

The conduct of the Republican politicians, headed by Mr. BARNEY, in the matter of these "general order" stores, can not be better stated than in the words of the congressional committee:

Whereas, the evidence fully shows that there not only was favoritism, but the Collector did not make the selection, but gave the general orders to certain parties who had no stores, bonded or otherwise, and suffered them to go among those having general orders, and compelled them to give a bonus of thirty per cent. for the privilege of retaining it. This was certainly a refinement of extortion or corruption upon the practices of former Administrations. Such a thing was never known before, and was reserved for the party who had promised ourselves and the nation that official corruption was to cease, and retrenchment and reform were to be once more inaugurated. Alas! "like Dead Sea fruits, they turned to ashes on the lips."

It does not appear that Mr. Barney received any part of this thirty per cent., but it is clear that he was notified of the outrages, committed by the men on whom

he had showered this bounty, and he did not condemn or check it.

It was generally believed, by those familiar with the facts, that the firm of BARNEY, BUTLER & PARSONS was a pool, into which, on the one hand, went all the earnings of the firm as lawyers, and Republican lobby agents, and on the other, all the money which Mr. BARNEY received, directly or indirectly, legally or illegally, as Collector. It was believed that the Collector was thereby directly and pecuniarily interested in the labor contract, which the old contractors had been compelled, by threats, to sign over to Republicans. And nobody could well doubt that if all this was true, Secretary CHASE must be more or less cognizant of the facts. The public was confirmed in all this by what happened during the investigation of a subsequent committee of Congress, of which Mr. HULBURD, of New York, was chairman, and which made a report in June last.

This committee was, to be sure, by reason of the conduct of its chairman, HULBURD, one of the most partisan and dishonest that ever disgraced an American Congress. In his conduct of the examination in New York, he surrendered himself entirely to Mr. BARNEY and his clique. The earnest efforts of the only Democrat on the committee, Mr. LE BLOND, could not withstand the partisan dishonesty of HULBURD, who seemed to have no purpose but to shield and protect infamous frauds upon the public treasury; acts so bad as to even excite the denunciation of his Republican colleague, ROLLINS, of New Hampshire. The sacred cause of the Union, for which he professed to be a loyal devotee, the important interests of the tax-payers, among his constituents, whose rights he was bound to maintain, were all pushed aside to screen political associates who were caught with arms in the public crib, up to their shoulders. The report of HULBURD is one mass of deception. Important testimony is suppressed, in the interest of political thieves and plunderers. The evidence of more than twenty witnesses examined by him, is kept out of his printed report. Shame on such personal and public infamy on the part of a man pretending to be honest!

But, even with all this apparent purpose of HULBURD, acting under dictation of the Administration at Washington, to cover up the practices of BARNEY and his Republican confederates against the people's money, now more than ever needed to maintain the people's flag, the complicity of BARNEY, with his law partners, to prostitute the office of Collector to unlawfully get money to enrich themselves, and to reelect Mr. LINCOLN, was satisfactorily uncovered.

During the examination of BARNEY, as a witness, the only members of the committee present, were HULBURD, chairman, and LE BLOND, and the former insisted that the witness should have opportunity to consult with his confederates in order to revise and re-write his testimony. Mr. BLOND made effort to probe to the root of the matter of the labor contract in respect to which BARNEY evaded a previous committee, and with the following result:

Q. I will ask you whether you received a part of the income of your law firm? A. I will say that nominally I do, but I give as much as I receive; I keep my place. Q. I will ask you, farther, whether your law partners receive any part or parcel of your salary, or the perquisites of your office? A. They do not; but I give them a sum that answers their purposes to retain me in, and they not lose anything. They have nothing to do with my accounts. Q. An annual sum, do you wish to be understood, or a sum in the aggregate. A.

It depends somewhat upon my receipts. Q. I confess that the answer which you give me seems to require that I should ask you a still further question, and if it turns out to be a purely personal matter or arrangement in which the receipts of the Custom House do not constitute a part of the business, why it shall be stricken out. About what amount do you annually pay to your co-partners? A. I am unable to answer that question without reference to my books and memoranda. Q. How much money do you receive from the firm of Barney, Butler and Parsons annually, and how much do you pay said firm out of the emoluments of your office? (To this Mr. Barney demurred answering, claiming it to be foreign to the purposes of the committee's investigation, and a needless inquiry into his private affairs.) (Thereupon Mr. Le Blond stated that he was informed that the firm of Barney, Butler & Parsons had taken fees in cases against the Government growing out of seizures made by the Custom House authorities; and further, that said firm had an interest in what is known as the labor contract, connected with the Custom House, and declared if these things were so, his question was pertinent, and ought, as connected with public interest, to be answered.) (There being but two members of the committee present, and they differing as to priority of time in which the questions should be put, and answers required, the further examination of Mr. Barney was deferred, and the committee adjourned.)

It is obvious from this report that if HULBURD had sustained LE BLOND, and compelled the witness to make answer, the whole conspiracy of plunder, the illegal act of having a partner in the salary and perquisites of a revenue office, would have been exposed. Even the questions of LE BLOND permitted by HULBURD to be put, terrified the witness into prevarications which would be mortifying enough to an upright man, or a man not utterly given over to lust of pecuniary gain in the midst of the unspeakable calamities of a civil war, which makes poverty and want stare laboring men in the face. And all this while the legal perquisites of the Collectorship are not much less (see p. 23 of Report) than twenty-five thousand dollars a year. One would suppose that even a Black-Republican maw would be satisfied with a sum equal to the salary of the President of the United States! but not so, think loyal leaguers, who shout for the Union, and rob the treasury at the same moment!

If the record of Black-Republican faithlessness to important public trusts, stopped here, the country could, perhaps, endure thus much of disgrace. But there is yet a lower depth of national humiliation to be sounded.

The exigency of a war begun avowedly for the Union, but now carried on *outside* the Union, to secure abandonment of slavery, in obedience to that logic and rhetoric of sectionalism, and hatred of slaveholders, which has, for three years, blotted out or rolled up in blood one half of the map of the Union, compelled Congress, in 1862, to enact that certain restrictions be placed upon commerce, from our northern ports, with foreign ports around the Gulf of Mexico. The object was to prevent supplies of war going to aid rebels in arms, by way of ports in the West India Islands, or in Mexico. The provisions of the law explicitly declared:

That whenever a permit or clearance is granted for either a foreign or domestic port, it shall be lawful for the collector of customs granting the same, if he shall deem it necessary, under the circumstances of the case, to require a bond to be executed by the master or the owner of the vessel in a penalty equal to the value of the cargo, and with sureties to the satisfaction of such collector, that the said shall be deliv-

ered at the destination for which it is cleared or permitted, and that no part thereof shall be used in affording aid or comfort to any person or parties in insurrections against the authority of the United States.

The Treasury Department, therefore, issued instructions to Collectors as follows:

In all cases where, in your judgment, there is ground of apprehension that any goods, wares or merchandise, shipped at your port, will be used in any way for the aid of the insurgents or the insurrection, you will require substantial security to be given that such goods, wares, or merchandise shall not be transferred to any place under insurrectionary control, and shall not in any way be used to give aid or comfort to such insurgents.

It is easy to see that this law, and the instructions, if executed by an honest Collector, and efficient subordinates, would effectually stop all illicit trade between New York city and the rebels. The men who were engaged in the business—a majority of whom were filling the air with their piercing shrieks of denunciation of all Democrats, and Gen. McClellan in particular, and filling their pockets with something else, at the same time—saw, that unless they could neutralize the law, by fraud and stealth, their business of treason was gone. Let the published record tell how successful for themselves, and their republican confederates in office under Mr. LINCOLN, but with what inexpressible humiliation for the Empire city and State, the work of giving aid and comfort to the enemy was done! The pen of history will pause benumbed, as it records how Collector BARNEY permitted, and most prominent Republican gentlemen in office actively coöperated in this scheme to supply the rebels with means to torture our fathers, sons, and brothers who had gone out to battle on our behalf! Treason and treachery have rarely accomplished a more infamous project! And yet, the men who are now the great pillars in Mr. LINCOLN's reflection temple were uppermost in the work! While General McCLELLAN was risking life at the head of his brave soldiers, men who now revile him, were conspiring to send aid to the enemy, against which he was contending, and some of those men high in office under President LINCOLN! Of such is a party "based on moral ideas!"

The blockade runners were not long in perceiving the now universally accepted fact that *every Black Republican office-holder has his price*, and they began at once to approach Mr. LINCOLN's appointees. There were men, in the New York Custom House, quick and ready to seize the bait. The scheme of taking straw bonds, and straw bail, or of purloining, by official aid, bonds once given; or of bribing the inspectors of the revenue, who had charge of loading suspicious vessels, was immediately matured. The pecuniary inducement was ample. The traitors, in the Republican ranks, were easily found, and seven thousand, nine hundred and thirty-two bonds were executed between September, 1861, and May, 1864, in the New York Custom House alone.

Among the persons who have been conspicuous in the fraudulent practices growing out of Mr. LINCOLN's election, is a man named ALBERT M. PALMER. He was examined by Mr. HULBURD's white-washing committee, while a prisoner in Fort Lafayette, and stated that he was commended to Mr. BARNEY as a man useful for collecting purposes, by Mayor ORDYKE, a prominent Republican, who has figured extensively in a way very undesirable to a man who respected the ten commandments. ORDYKE secured



PALMER's appointment, and in the hands of the latter, Mr. BARNEY threw almost unlimited power of control in the Custom House. Mr. DERHAM, a most intelligent witness, examined by the Committee, swears (p. 238) that "Mr. Palmer, everybody around the Custom House supposed to be principal man there, and he, in fact, was said to be the Collector."

Another witness, appointed in the Custom House, says:

"I had a situation in the Custom House, which was given me without solicitation. I had been very active in my party, and had spent between two and three thousand dollars, and was active in getting places for my friends. Mr. Palmer told me that I ought to have some place for myself. I told him I could take no place which required active duty. I was appointed a debentured clerk. . . . I was there a year and a quarter. *I think a dozen days will cover all I was on duty.*"

The following extracts, from pages 146 and 147 of the report, will present a pretty clear idea of the kind of men Republicans, high in office, collect around them:

By Mr. Le Blond: Q. What were Palmer's circumstances? A. He was a clerk in the Custom House at \$1,500. Q. Was his salary his only source of living, and his only means of paying you back again? A. He had commissions on the collections *for the party*. They collected so much every year from the Custom House, and I believe he used to receive a percentage on the full amount that was collected. I thought when he was collecting last November or December that he would pay me back what he owed me; he owed me then \$600 or \$700, but he did not do it.

By Mr. Rollins: Q. You say that some 20 men in the 17th ward were appointed to office on your recommendation and the recommendation of other men in the ward; did any one of these 20 men ever pay you directly or indirectly, any money or other valuable consideration for your influence in securing their appointment? A. Most of them owed me money; *were poor devils who had no money to pay rents*; they were the best working politicians in my ward.

By Mr. Le Blond: Q. What business did Palmer follow before he went into the Custom House? A. I never knew him before he went to the Custom House. Q. Do you know whether he is a professional man? A. I have understood that he was; that he *passed examination as a lawyer*.

By Mr. Rollins: Where did Palmer live during his term of office in the Custom House? A. He lived in the 17th ward. Q. Did he board at a hotel? A. When I first knew him he boarded at private houses, and was afterwards at a private hotel. Q. Was his mode of living expensive? A. More expensive than mine. Q. Did he keep horses? A. No, Sir; he used to drive mine; I generally kept three; sometimes he would take his wife out with him, and get my team, and sometimes he would take a single horse; he left my ward and lived at the Metropolitan hotel. Q. How long since? A. Probably in August or September last. Q. Upon what terms did he live there? A. He told me he paid \$35 a week. Q. What was his salary, do you say? A. \$1,500 a year, and he used to have his commission, 24 per cent.

The introduction by OPDYKE; the ready promotion by BARNEY to the power portrayed by the witnesses cited; the *small* legal receipts by PALMER as salary, and the *large* expenditure, sufficiently explain what was the function of the latter, in the scheme of peculation and plunder concocted by prominent Republicans. And no one is surprised, when at last, exposure of what has been done lands Mr. PALMER in Fort Lafayette, a prisoner of state. He was ar-

rested by Marshal MURRAY, without a suspicion by Collector BARNEY that the practises of his young friend had been discovered, and the facts, touching Republican complicity with blockade runners, all laid bare.

Besides PALMER, there was, in the Custom House, another eminent Republican, a most controlling man in that organization which elected Mr. LINCOLN on the basis of "moral ideas." He had outrun the swiftest in denunciation of Democrats who did not think it the sum and substance of all philanthropy and patriotism, to "avoid" and "abhor" the people of the slave-labor States, with whom we, of the North, had entered into the most sacred, and tender relations of country. He had addressed wide-awake processions innumerable, in advocacy of the *honesty* and statesmanship of Mr. LINCOLN, and he was not forgotten when the latter entered into the seats of power, and made up his jewels. Of such was HENRY B. STANTON.

It was a part of the Republican plan to make him Deputy Collector, and it was done. STANTON says that Mr. CHASE told him that the salary was small, but *his income could be increased*. He was put in charge of the bond bureau of the Custom House, through which shipments to the rebels were made. He prepared the bonds, as he says, by Mr. BARNEY's request, and with his approval of the form adopted. And here crops out the first step in the iniquity! The law requires the bond not to furnish the goods to rebels to be given by the *master of the ship*, and, will it be believed, it was drawn so as to shelter the master, and substitute the owner of the goods? All the bonds so taken were thus illegal, good for nothing, and so the shipper went free in his work of treason! More than that, it was proved that bonds were cancelled at the Custom House for direct pecuniary consideration. On this point, let a witness, Mr. ALFRED T. CONKLIN, called before the Committee, tell his own story of his experience:

Alfred T. Conklin sworn and examined (commission merchant, No. 42 New street), by the Chairman. Q. How long have you been a commission merchant? A. About 12 years. Q. Are you engaged in importations and exportations? A. I receive flour from the West; ship goods to the West Indies and the British Provinces; also receive goods from England; not a great many, however. Q. You say that you have shipped to the West Indies somewhat. We understand that there have been some new treasury regulations since the Rebellion commenced, differing from what formerly prevailed, and especially requiring bonds that were not formerly given; has your business required you to give any such bonds? A. I have not shipped any such goods myself that required me to give any such bonds, but I have become bondsman for other parties who shipped. Q. Have you done very much business of that kind? A. I have only been bondsman for one firm, with the exception of one other instance, I was bondsman for Middleton & Co., and in one instance for Wm. M. Smith. I think the bonds in that case were for \$600 and \$1,500. I have been on the bonds of Middleton & Co. for \$80,000 or \$90,000 on different shipments from \$900 probably up to \$30,000 on different vessels, from a period commencing last June. Q. The committee have taken some testimony in reference to the nature of these bonds and the parties. I want to ask you whether the bonds that you have signed have all or any of them been cancelled or surrendered afterwards? A. Some six or seven have been surrendered. Q. The committee wish a full history of this transaction just as it took place. A. It occurred in this way; it was the general talk here that these bonds could be

bought up. I was passing through the Custom House one day on business, and I asked one of the brokers, by mere chance, if such things could be done. He said he thought it could be. I asked him if he ever knew it to be done; he said he had. The broker's name was Henry Smith; I think he resides in Jersey City. He is a broker in the Custom House. I told him that I was on some bonds, and if that was the case I would like to buy them up, and I told him to see how it was. He reported what he had done, and the result of it was that we bought up six or seven bonds. Q. What was the price paid? A. The whole amount was about \$1,600 that I paid for the bonds. Q. That is the amount you paid Mr. Smith? A. Yes, Sir. Q. How long a time intervened, in your opinion, betwixt Mr. Smith's saying to you that things were arranged, and your entering, with Mr. Middleton, Stanton's office? A. Mr. Middleton, previously to the bond being given, asked me if I would have any objections to going on a bond with him. I told him no. He stated that they had got into difficulty with the Custom House, and that was the first occasion that a bond had been required of them. I told him that I had no objections to going on the bond at all. So the next day, or the day after, I think—I will not be certain which—I went up to the Custom House with him to give this bond, and as I said that I had negotiated with Smith in reference to it, I will state how it took place. I happened to be passing along through the Custom House within a few days of the time that this bond was given, and having heard about the getting up of bonds, I asked Smith about it. He said he thought it could be done, and wanted to know why. I told him I understood those things were done, and if other people are doing it, I didn't know why we should not do it. He afterwards told me that it could be done. When I agreed to go on this bond of Middleton, I did not know that the bond was for so large an amount, and that I would have to justify to the amount of \$64,000. As soon as I went up there and found that this was the case, I turned to Smith, "You say you can buy up these bonds. What will it cost to get up this bond, the penal sum of which is \$64,000? I cannot swear that I am worth \$64,000." Says he, "I will see." He goes to Mr. Stanton's room and comes back. There was some little difference about the price, I think he asked \$650. He went back and forth two or three times, and finally came down to \$600; and when we got as far as that I said to Mr. Smith, "Now, if Mr. Stanton is going to sell this bond, what difference does it make whether I swear I am worth \$64,000 or sixty-four cents? I cannot swear that I am worth \$64,000. If he has a mind to take me and not swear me, I will go on the bond. It makes no odds to him if he sells his bond." Smith says, "I will go in and see him." He went to see; was gone some time; came back and said, "That will be all right, he will not ask you any questions at all." I said, "Are you sure of that?" and he said, "That is understood." "I want it distinctly understood," says I, "that I will not swear to any amount at all." He went away, came back, and said, "It is all right, you will not be asked any questions at all." When he went into Mr. Stanton's room, Mr. Middleton came up, and Mr. Stanton says, "Is this Mr. Middleton?" "Yes, sir." "Are you worth the amount of that shipment?" Mr. Middleton says, "Yes, sir." He then turns around to me. "Is this the bondsman?" Says I, "Yes, sir." "Will you swear?" (waving his hand) and that was all there was about it. Q. Now, I want to recall your attention to the point about which I was enquiring before this statement. What, in your opinion, was the intervening time between the last interview with Smith and your entering Stanton's room with Mr. Middleton? A. I do not think it was ten minutes, because about that time I stood there waiting for Mr. Middleton to get his papers through. He had sent for me to come up to the Custom House. I went to the Custom House, found Mr. Middleton, and he said, "I will be through in a few minutes." He was standing in a line, and I stood there talking to Mr. Smith while Mr. Middleton was

getting his papers through. Q. In your former testimony you stated that for some reason you had occasion to open the door that led into Mr. Stanton's office, you found him leaning on the desk, and talking to Smith? A. That was not upon this occasion, but another time; Smith was then negotiating for some other bonds, and staid a long while. I was in a hurry, as it was just before 'change, and I went to the door of the front office, but I could not see him there, and I opened the door, went in, and looked through the other door, and he was leaning on the desk talking with Mr. Stanton. Q. Was that in reference to an arrangement for the surrender of a bond? A. Yes, sir. Q. Do you recollect what one? A. I do not. Q. Was it previous to or after this arrangement about the \$64,000 bond? A. It was after the first bond—the \$64,000 bond—in the course of two or three weeks or a month after that. Q. You do not remember either, I suppose, the specific bond or the amount of it, when you saw Smith leaning on the desk and talking to Stanton? A. No, sir, it was a small bond, I think he asked \$150, and I told him that was an exorbitant price, and he went back and forth two or three times; Mr. Stanton would not yield at all. Smith said that Stanton said it was just as much risk to take a small bond as a large one. On another occasion, when he was negotiating for the surrender of a bond, \$25 split them, and finally it was settled by his agreeing to pay \$100 before three o'clock, Stanton saying that he wanted to use that amount. This was about two o'clock.

MARCH 22, 1864.

Alfred T. Conklin recalled.

By the Chairman:

Question. Do you recollect whether the bonds that came into your hands were surrendered or given up without the word "cancelled" being upon them, without Mr. Stanton's name being upon them? Answer. The names were cut out. Q. Who cut them out? A. I cut them out after they came into my hands. Q. Do you recollect how long it was after the execution of the bonds before you obtained them through Mr. Smith? A. I obtained one of these bonds inside of an hour after it was executed. Q. Can you recollect who the principal of the bond was? A. It was Middleton & Co.; I was the security on it.

By Mr. Rollins:

Question. Did you go in with Middleton when he executed it? Answer. Yes, sir. Q. Did he charge you a surety fee upon it? A. I think a dollar and a half or two dollars; that was paid, and within an hour from that time I had the bond in my possession. Q. Do you know what that bond cost? A. Six hundred dollars. Q. When the bond came back the word "cancelled" was not written across it, it was simply handed to you as you left it? A. Yes, sir, that bond is destroyed; all the rest of the bonds are intact, with the exception of the signatures of Middleton & Co. Q. What was the cause of this bond being destroyed? A. That was the first bond that was ever got up. Q. For what amount was it given? A. About \$64,000 was the penal sum. When this bond came up it was a bond of a larger amount than I was willing to swear I was worth (\$64,000). I told Mr. Smith, "These gentlemen want me to go on a bond for \$64,000, and I do not feel as if I wanted to swear that I am worth that; and the consequence is that if I do not swear to that I cannot go upon that bond, but as Mr. Stanton is going to give us that bond back immediately, what odds does it make whether I swear I am worth \$64,000 or sixty-four cents? The bargain was made before the bond was given that the amount to be paid for it was \$600. Q. How do you know the bargain was made? A. I made it. Q. With whom? A. Mr. Smith. Q. And he made it with whom? A. I suppose he made it with Mr. Stanton. Q. How was he spoken of generally? what designation was given him? A. Mr. Stanton; I did not know there was a younger Stanton there, I did not know Mr. Stanton nor the boy. I made this agreement, and I will tell you how it proves that it is Mr. Stanton who is concerned. When I told Mr. Smith

that I would not swear that I was worth \$64,000, says I, if you will go to Mr. Stanton, and get him to agree not to swear me, I will become bondsman on the bond. He went from me into Mr. Stanton's room; I stood in the rotunda; he went in there; was gone from three to five minutes; came back again, and he says it is all right. Within ten minutes afterwards the papers had progressed so far that they went in to Mr. Stanton to have clearance made and the bond taken. We went in there before Mr. Stanton; Mr. Stanton turned to Mr. Middleton and says, "Is this Mr. Middleton?" "Yes." "Do you swear that you are worth the amount of this shipment (raising his hand)?" "I do." "Is this the bondsman (turning to me)?" "Yes, sir." "Do you swear (raising his hand)?" "Yes, sir." So we carried out the programme.

When all this infamy was made known to President LINCOLN, was Mr. STANTON ignominiously expelled from office? Not at all! *He was permitted to honorably resign.* Why was he not arrested and imprisoned in Fort Lafayette? Who shall say? Rather, who shall deny that neither Mr. LINCOLN, or Mr. CHASE, or Mr. BARNEY dared touch one hair of STANTON's head? He knew too much! He could tell who were his accomplices and abettors, in the wretched business of furnishing supplies to rebels, during the day, and making Republican stump speeches, in the evening, denouncing GEORGE B. MCLELLAN.

During all this time, if Mr. THURLOW WEED is to be believed, and reference can be had to his letters published in his *Albany Journal*, Collector BARNEY did,

"Fold up his tents like the Arabs,  
And quietly steal away."

In the meantime, corruption grew apace. An appraiser was convicted of stealing merchandise, and yet nothing was done. LINCOLN, for some reason dared not move. The Republican politicians were purloining millions. At last, however, public opinion could be appeased no longer, and Mr. BARNEY was, just as the political canvass was coming on, *persuaded* by his confederates to give up his office and avoid exposure, and save LINCOLN.

But who succeeded him? Here is touched another chapter of Republican honesty and patriotism!

The facts of the blockade of the ports of the seceded States by the loyal States, the capture by our navy of many valuable ships and their cargoes, and their final judicial condemnation and sale as prizes of war, are well known. In the early part of the rebellion most of the prizes were sent by our gallant naval officers into the port of New York for adjudication and sale. This was of great commercial benefit to the city and State. But, at last, when the navy came to get their allotted share of the prizes, it was found that a large portion of the proceeds had been pocketed, under one pretence and another, by Mr. LINCOLN's loyal (?) office holders in New York. Conspicuous among these men, who thus in effect conspired to rob our brave sailors of the just reward of many a night of anxious watching, were DISTRICT ATTORNEY SMITH, MARSHAL MURRAY, MR. SIMEON DRAPER, and a ring of gentlemen who managed to get themselves appointed appraisers, in almost every case. The result of all these official practices was that naval officers sent no more prizes to New York, and a committee was appointed to investigate the subject. During this investigation, charges of the most serious character were made, and *proved* against Mr. DRAPER, who had been appointed to be auctioneer of the prize vessels and their cargoes.

He was accused of extortionate fees, of wrongfully deducting these fees from the proceeds of sales, and of keeping back government funds. His fees were so exorbitant that they excited the astonishment of everybody but those denounced by Mr. UPTON as co-operating with him to represent his exactions as proper. The charges against Mr. DRAPER cannot be better stated than in the language of Mr. UPTON, who was counsel for the naval officers. He says:

Mr. Draper kept no separate bank account of the proceeds of the prize property. It was all mixed in with his own, and might at any time have been seized by his creditors.

The deposit of a fund so large, in his own name, even using the puerile disguise of the words "in trust," was certainly not the act of a cautious business man, if it was that of an honest one. That he did not promptly pay the fund when demanded is fully proved by witnesses and written papers of demand, notwithstanding the statements to the contrary of himself and son and clerk. Day after day and week after week, he retained large amounts of these moneys upon frivolous excuses, in spite of incessant demands for its payment by the marshal; and this was not the act of a faithful man.

That it was his habit to make fictitious bids at auction sales, thereby running an eager purchaser up beyond the fair price of the article sold, and thus committing a fraud upon him, and bringing the government sales into disrepute, is proved by the young man's confessions, as well as by other testimony; and this was not the act of an honest man, or of one whose "skill tended to promote the interests of the government."

In one case, sworn to by O'Donohue, it appears that Mr. Draper allowed a reclamation without the assent or action of any government official whatsoever, solely on his own responsibility; and it appears that he favored and urged with persistent pertinacity the first reclamation which was made in favor of a purchaser of prize property, and this may be regarded as the "*causa sine qua non*" of all the irregularities and frauds in such proceedings which succeeded.

The learned counsel says that Mr. Draper charged for his services the usual and customary commission. This is correct, for this—that the commission paid to auctioneers for the sale of merchandise of ordinary amounts and in the ordinary way, in ordinary times, cannot lay the basis of a custom for a commission on prize sales of enormous amounts in time of war, and where the auctioneer has no care, no custody, no responsibility. It is neither proper nor just to speak of a *customary* commission for such a service.

There has been nothing like a precedent in our community to establish such a custom. *The truth is, he charged and retained an enormous and wholly unwarrantable, unprecedented, and exorbitant commission; a commission so utterly disproportioned to the trifling service performed, that it was, in truth, nothing short of an imposition—a shameful imposition—upon the Navy Pension Fund and the naval captors, of more than three fourths of the large sums retained.* And when we think that the continuance of that imposition operating upon the very large amount of prize property in the district yet unsold, would have increased the sum retained by this auctioneer for his service to an amount not much, if any, short of one hundred thousand dollars, we cease to wonder at the desperate efforts made by him and his friends to coerce all parties into tame submission to his exactions, and the unworthy means resorted to by him and them to wreak revenge upon all such as could not be induced at his or their bidding to disobey the instructions they had received from their superiors, to violate their official obligations and quietly assent to the perpetration of his extortions.

But this is not all. The learned counsel seems to think that the law has now stepped in and made pro-

vision for the employment of the auctioneer and his compensation, this investigation has nothing now to act upon in the matter of this wrong, so far as Mr. Draper is concerned. Not so. It has been truly said, that one great purpose of this investigation is to ascertain what has become of the proceeds of the prize property. The testimony shows that Mr. Draper now has in his hands a sum amounting to nearly \$3,500 belonging to the Navy Pension Fund and the captors, that he has retained this amount as his claimed 2½ per cent. commission out of the proceeds of sales made by him after the consent for its allowance no longer existed; that its allowance at any time was based solely upon consent and the taxation of the court; that the consent ceasing, the court has refused the taxation; and this sum, although demanded from him by the marshal, he has refused, and now refuses to return. How, in the face of this, can counsel seriously assert that there is nothing disclosed by this investigation militating against Mr. Draper?

As the counsel representing the interests of the captors in these causes in which the money has been thus retained, the undersigned respectfully asks if it comes within the sphere of the official duty of the Solicitor of the Treasury, that instructions may be given forthwith to the district attorney to take such steps as may be requisite to enforce the return of this money.

The testimony has proved that until the opposition arose to a continued compliance to the exorbitant impositions of Mr. Draper, the auctioneer, no complaints were ever heard of the character of those set forth in the document signed by Moses H. Grinnell as chairman of this committee; that the information upon which these statements were made all came from Draper; that Grinnell procured the employment of Draper as auctioneer; that Grinnell urged the district attorney to take such action as should insure the prize sales to Draper, with a commission of two and one half per cent.; that Grinnell is the personal, intimate friend of Draper; that after Grinnell had been informed that the Secretary of the Navy objected to the allowance of this enormous commission to Draper, and after he had become apprised that the district attorney had been instructed by his official superior, the Solicitor of the Treasury, to oppose the continued allowance of this enormous commission, he went to the district attorney and urged him to violate his official duty, to disregard his instructions and consent to such allowance; that to induce him thus to violate his duty and disregard his instructions, he furnished him with a certificate, signed by himself and others, stating that two and one half per cent. was the customary commission paid to an auctioneer for the sale of merchandise in New York; that one of the gentlemen (Mr. Min-turn) who signed this certificate (and probably others) was not aware to what it was designed to apply, nor apprised for what purpose it was obtained; that so far from the truth is the statement of that certificate, that a gentleman of large experience, called as a witness from the insurance office of Mr. Grinnell himself, swears that one half of one per cent. would be the extent of a fair, reasonable, and customary commission paid to an auctioneer for performing the precise service performed by Mr. Draper, as detailed to him by the Solicitor; and his evidence is fully corroborated by that of other witnesses; that when the efforts of Mr. Draper and Mr. Grinnell proved unavailing to secure the further allowance of this extraordinary depletion of the proceeds of prize property, then, and not till then, was heard the outcry of frauds and corruption, of robberies and peculations, and fraudulent reclamations; then, and not till then, were the ears of the Secretary of the Navy assailed with the charges

from Draper and Grinnell against the Government officials connected with adjudications and sales of prize property; then, and not till then, were the newspapers resorted to to fill the public mind with poisonous suspicions that the captured property in this district was being absorbed by the ravenous spoliations of a set of hungry vultures and sharks, and robbers; and then, and not till then, did Mr. Grinnell, under the advice and with the assistance of his friend, Mr. Draper, constitute his committee of merchants (who never met, and never organized, and never saw the written statement of charges signed by him, as chairman of the committee, to originate, direct, and control this organization).

Some idea may be formed of the amount of money Mr. DRAPER thus withheld as fees, by his statement, (p. 31) that his commissions as auctioneer, from August, 1861, to December, 1862, were THIRTY THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND ONE DOLLARS AND THIRTY-FIVE CENTS. A pretty little sum, and not a small inducement for sustaining the extraordinary pretensions and assumptions of President LINCOLN!

Mr. JOURDAN, the Solicitor of the Treasury, who has, within the last three years, earned a most unenviable notoriety, as a willing and most unscrupulous tool of the Administration in covering up the improper practices and frauds of Mr. LINCOLN's friends, vainly attempted, in his report, to palliate the corruptions in prize business, as Mr. HULBURD had made effort in the revenue transactions of BARNEY, BUTLER, STANTON, and PALMER, but the Navy Department was too weak already, in public estimation, to bear such a load of obloquy, and Mr. DRAPER, as punishment for his improper conduct and pecuniary greed, was removed from office, and deprived of such further opportunity to withhold the hard earned money of the brave officers and sailors of our gallant Navy, who have so often, in this civil war, borne the naval thunders of the Union in honor and in triumph.

But Mr. DRAPER's removal, for cause, from one relation to the Government, was only to be followed by promotion to a better position. Comment is unnecessary!

It is not to be argued from all this record of official infidelity, that all members of the Republican organization are rogues, who look upon their country's woes as so many opportunities for enriching themselves. Far from it. The facts, however, do show that ABRAHAM LINCOLN cannot, or will not, in his administration of public affairs, call around him the integrity and ability of his party. He travels only in the circle of shameless and polluted partisans, who can be bribed by chances of plunder to abstain from just and loyal rebuke of his untold acts of folly and crime. If a man is known by the company he keeps, Mr. LINCOLN's real character ought to deter honorable men, of all political parties, from giving countenance and support to his impudent pretensions for a reelection. If all sense of public honor has not fled from among us, and if a free ballot box be not a thing of the past, a verdict of condemnation of ABRAHAM LINCOLN will be uttered in November which will stand as significant warning to all future Presidents.







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